

Trent had gone to her rest before the birth of her grandchild ; but Captain Trent and his two stalwart sons were Ursula's guests that night, and also Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert Fortescue, from Pine Trees Hall, Cheshire ; for the young squire had won his wife, and in the meantime their abode would be upon his Cheshire estate, so long as the old Squire was hale and hearty in Haydon Hall. Ursula was hard put to it to find accommodation for them all, but it was accomplished ; for it was her heart's desire that all dear to her should sleep beneath her own roof-tree on the last night—ay, the last—for to-morrow was her wedding-day. And they were all there, thank God, an unbroken family circle, save that it was a headless one—yet not headless—oh, never that while Ursula lived !

There was a great noise in the house. Everybody seemed to be talking at once, and everybody seemed to be calling for Ursula ; but she had stolen away up to the little dressing-room, where lay the bridal robe she would wear upon the morrow. Just to be quiet a little, after all the bustle of the arrivals, and also to kneel down to thank God that, in His great mercy, not one should be wanting this night ; that all she loved would be with her on